

# [***Definitive Guide To The Anti- Woke Protests: From Bud Light To Target To The U.S. Navy And Everyone Else***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:688W-1BP1-DXVP-50WJ-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 1915 words

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**Highlight:** Other targets have included Starbucks, Miller Lite and the Los Angeles Dodgers.

**Body**

**Topline**

After Bud Light came under fire from far-right pundits and social media users for a brief partnership with trans TikTok star Dylan Mulvaney, critics are seizing the momentum and piling on many more companies for celebrating Pride or diversity, in some cases spreading misinformation and in others recirculating promotions that are years old, branding the companies as woke and calling for boycotts.

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Rainbow bottles of Bud Light during the 30th Annual GLAAD Media Awards in New York on May 4, 2019. (Photo by Bryan Bedder/Getty Images for GLAAD)

Getty Images for GLAAD

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**Key Facts**

**Adidas:** Critics jumped on the sportswear brand for a trans-inclusive swimwear marketing campaign, including swimmer Sharron Davies, a frequent critic of transgender women participating in women s sports, whotweetedthe hashtag #AdidasHatesWomen. (May 18, 2023)

**Bud Light:** The beer brand facedboycottsand a dip in sales after it sent TikTok star Dylan Mulvaney, known for documenting her gender transition to her 10 million followers, a customized can with her face on it on April 1, with high-profile critics including musicians Kid Rock, Travis Tritt and John Rich, and pundits Ben Shapiro and Candace Owens. (April 7, 2023)

**Chick-fil-A:**Though famous for its Christian affiliation, the restaurant chain came under fire on social media forhiringa diversity, equity and inclusion vice president though Erick McReynolds has served in this position since 2021. (May 31, 2023)

**Costa Coffee:** The U.K.-based coffee companysparkedsome criticism because of an illustration of a trans person with top surgery chest scars on a company van, angering British anti-trans activists who feel gender-affirming surgery mocks women who need double mastectomies for medical reasons prompting a forceful defense from the company, which stated the design was intended to encourage people to feel welcomed, free and unashamedly proud to be themselves. (August 2, 2023)

**Cracker Barrel:** The Southern-themed chain restaurant, once famous for discriminating against its own LGBTQ employees, facedoutragefor making a post in honor of Pride month and for its commitment to DEI, leading one user to tweet the instantly-memed phrase, Cracker Barrel has fallen. (June 9, 2023)

**Dr. Martens:** The famously LGBTQ-friendly companyraffledoff a pair of boots designed by Jess Vosseteig, an artist who focuses on queer and feminist designs, featuring an illustration of a trans person with top surgery chest scars, drawing some anger from conservatives. (August 1, 2023)

**Ford:** Critics including conservative pundit Dave Rubinrecirculateda two-year-old campaign in which Ford, in response to internet trolls, built the Very Gay Raptor, a Ranger Raptor car adorned with rainbow colors that hasappearedin promotional materials and at Pride events. (May 18, 2023)

**Garth Brooks:** The country music star sparked some backlash from right-wing fans after hesaidhe would serve every brand of beer including boycotted brands like Bud Light at his new Nashville bar, Friends in Low Places, telling customers: If you re an asshole, there are plenty of other places on lower Broadway. (June 12, 2023)

**Jack Daniels:** Soon after the Bud Light controversy began, Tritt and other criticsdug upa two-year-old Jack Daniels marketing campaign featuring drag performers from**RuPaul s Drag Race**. (April 7, 2023)

**Kohl s:** The retailer came under fire on social media for its Pridecollection, which includes clothing for children and babies, sparking calls for a boycott from conservatives including Fox News host Laura Ingraham, who suggested onTwitterthe company does not respect common sense or the America ideal. (May 30, 2023)

**Los Angeles Dodgers:** The baseball team cameunder firefrom some Catholics, including advocacy group CatholicVoice, and Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) after it planned to honor The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a charity that raises money for LGBTQ causes and performs in drag dressed as nuns, at its Pride Night, causing the Dodgers to uninvite the Sisters to the outrage of the Dodgers other LGBTQ partner groups. (May 23, 2023)

**Major League Baseball:** The MLB wastargetedfor making tweets in support of the LGBTQ community and changing its Facebook profile picture to a rainbow logo for Pride month, sparking hateful comments and some were quick to notice it changed its profile picture back to normal the next day. (June 2, 2023)

**Mark Cuban:** The billionairecalledwokeness good business, citing top companies like Apple and Microsoft, which support the LGBTQ community, as examples, though his comments faced pushback from conservatives and fellow**Shark Tank** investor Kevin O Leary. (June 14, 2023)

**Maybelline:** Some conservativescondemnedthe cosmetics brand for featuring a bearded LGBTQ influencer in a makeup advertisement though Maybelline had used men and LGBTQ celebrities in ads for years, unveiling its first male-led marketing campaign in 2017. (July 13, 2023)

**Miller Lite:** A months-old commercial for Women s History Month, in which actress and comedian Ilana Glazer promotes the company s commitment to recycling old advertisements it deems sexist to create fertilizer to brew more beer, resurfaced in mid-May and caught the attention of Joe Rogan and Shapiro, whoslammed identity ***politics*** (parent company Molson Coors forcefully defended the campaign, stating there is nothing remotely controversial about it). (May 17, 2023)

**Nascar:** The racing organizationtweetedin support of Pride month, drawing criticism from conservatives including pundit Mark Levin, but Reps. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) and Mark Pocan (D-Wis.) quickly came to its defense on social media. (June 2, 2023)

**Nike:** Another Mulvaney collaborator, Nike wascondemnedby Olympic athletes Davies and Caitlyn Jenner for its marketing campaign in which Mulvaney modeled leggings and sports bras. (April 7, 2023)

**The North Face:** The outdoor product companyunveiledits second annual Summer of Pride marketing campaign featuring drag queen and environmentalist Pattie Gonia to urge customers to enjoy the outdoors, quickly sparking outrage from critics including Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.), whoaccusedthe brand of sexually targeting children, afalseclaim often used by conservative critics to target drag queens. (May 24, 2023)

**The Oscars:** Right-wing critics on social mediatargetedthe Academy Awards for a new set of rules governing Best Picture nominations intended to encourage diversity though some falsely stated all nominees must meet an onscreen diversity requirement, which is just one of several standards that could be met for eligibility. (June 20, 2023)

**Starbucks:**The coffee company debuted an ad in India depicting a father reconciling his relationship with his trans daughter, which some labeled sweet and groundbreaking, though it attracted criticism fromShapiroand othercommentators. (May 18, 2023)

**Starbucks:** The companyfacedanother controversy a month later, sparking outrage from the left and self-congratulatory reactions from the right after a workers union, Starbucks Workers United, alleged the company directed stores to take down Pride decorations, though the company denied this. (June 13, 2023)

**Target:** The retailer sparkedoutragefrom conservatives includingMegyn Kellyand Shapiro for selling trans-inclusive swimwear (though many on social media spread misinformation that tuck-friendly swimsuits were sold for children, when they were only available in adult sizes) and items designed by a brand whose other designs have used Satanic imagery, leading the retailer to pull some items from its Pride collection, a decision that angered LGBTQ supporters. (May 24, 2023)

**U.S. Navy:** The Navydeletedposts it made for Pride month on its Twitter and Instagram accounts and quickly replaced a Pride-themed Facebook cover photo after generating backlash. (June 2, 2023)

**Key Background**

These controversies follow a slew of legislation and protests targeting the LGBTQ community in recent months. The ACLU hasidentified482 bills introduced in state legislatures this year as anti-LGBTQ, including many that seek to limit gender-affirming care for transgender youth and education of gender and sexuality in schools. Drag performers have also come under attack as some states move tobanor limit drag performances in public spaces and outraged conservativesprotestoutside drag story hour events.

**Surprising Fact**

Though woke is an American phrase, its meaning has been co-opted and exported as right-wing activists targetinternational brands. Woolworths, a South African fashion retailer, came under fire for making a Pride month post in which it committed to better serve our LGBTQIA+ people and customers and cited various initiatives like creating an internal Pride task team. In response to criticism, the company tweeted: Every person has the right to dignity regardless of their identity - this is a fact enshrined in our constitution. It is not up for debate. **Glamour UK** also faced right-wing online pushback after it featured pregnant transgender man Logan Brown on the cover of its Pride issue. New Zealand retailer The Warehouse faced similar online backlash, reportedly for selling items from Disney s Pride collection.

**Chief Critics**

The various boycott efforts have beenridiculedby some celebrities and social media users. Country singer Zach BryancriticizedTritt s boycott of Bud Light on Twitter, stating: I just think insulting transgender people is completely wrong because we live in a country where we can all just be who we want to be. Radio host Howard Sternsaidhe was dumbfounded by the Bud Light backlash and questioned why Kid Rock and Tritt would find the Dylan Mulvaney ad hurtful.**The Guardian** columnist Arwa Mahdawicriticizedthe backlash to the Miller Lite ad and considered it a targeted harassment and intimidation campaign against company marketing executives whose personal details and social media profiles were reportedly dug up by angered conservatives. After the Bud Light controversy picked up steam, some social media users postedvideosof themselves throwing away unopened cans of beer but others pointed out they ve already purchased the beer and given Bud Light their money. When Shapiro accused Starbucks of exporting the transness to India, some pointed out India has had a concept of a third gender known as hijra for thousands of years,enshrinedin law since 2014, though hijras face discrimination in society.

**Contra**

Corporations have also previously facedcriticismfrom supporters of the LGBTQ community for their Pride month outreach, sometimes critically dubbing it rainbow capitalism. Companies have been criticized for making small, symbolic gestures like changing their logos to rainbow colors during June whiledonatingmoney to anti-LGBTQ causes or politicians.

**Big Number**

$3.9 trillion. That s theestimatedannual purchasing power of the global LGBTQ community, according to corporate advisory and asset management group LGBT Capital. The United States is estimated to account for $1.1 trillion of this total.

**Further Reading**

What Does Woke Even Mean? How A Decades-Old Racial Justice Term Became Co-Opted By ***Politics***(Forbes)

How Trans TikTok Star Dylan Mulvaney Became A Far-Right Target After Scoring Deals With Bud Light And Nike(Forbes)

Molson Coors Slaps Anti- Woke Critics Like Joe Rogan And Ben Shapiro And Defends Miller Lite Women s History Ad(Forbes)

L.A. Dodgers Pride Night Controversy Explained: Why LGBTQ Groups And Politicians Are Slamming Team(Forbes)

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